

A RECORD OF THE OCCURRENCE OF THE TICK *IXODES*
MURIS BISHOPP AND SMITH ON MUSKRATS IN UTAH •

Glen M. Kohls

Published records indicate that although the tick *Ixodes muris* occurs rather commonly on a wide variety of birds and mammals in the northeastern United States and eastern Canada, this and other species of ticks are seldom found on muskrats anywhere in North America (Bishopp and Smith 1937; Cooley and Kohls 1945; Bishopp and Trembley 1945; Bequaert 1945; Anastos 1947). The most westerly locality record of this tick until now was that of a female off *Microtus p. pennsylvanicus*, Portage Lake, Washtenaw County, Michigan, June 6, 1920, as reported by Cooley and Kohls (1945).

In March 1951, Mr. Robert A. McCullough, a graduate student in wildlife management at Utah State Agricultural College, examined 812 trapped muskrats for ear tags near Locomotive Springs at the north end of Great Salt Lake. Three partially engorged female ticks, subsequently identified by the writer as *Ixodes muris*, were found behind the ears of two of the animals examined. This appears to be the first record of the occurrence of ticks on muskrats in western North America, and the discovery of the species concerned at a point so distant from previously recorded localities is of additional interest. Speculation as to whether this tick is native to Utah or was introduced would appear to be futile but it may be worth nothing that according to McCullough (in litt.) a number of "black muskrats" were imported to the area from Canada about 1920. "This transplantation persisted in all probability, as the skulls are very similar to those of the eastern muskrat, *Ondatra zibethica zibethica* L."

References

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*From the Federal Security Agency, Public Health Service, National Institutes of Health, National Microbiological Institute, Rocky Mountain Laboratory, Hamilton, Montana.

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